

**Eastern Washington Resource Advisory Council Meeting
Spokane BLM District, Spokane, WA - April 27, 2001**

Members Present (interest/term expiration):

Sub-Group 1

Andrew Berg (Energy & Minerals/2002)
Dave Billingsley (Grazing/2001)
Maurice Williamson (Commercial Recreation/2002)

Sub-Group 2

Mark Amara (Archaeological/Historical/2002)
Linda Harder (Dispersed Recreation/2003)
Mike Peterson (Environmental/2002)
Laura Smith (Environmental/2001)

Sub-Group 3

JoAnna Meninick (Indian Tribe/2003)
Linda North-Spaulding (Public at Large/2003)
Richard Old (Academician/2001))
Doug Pineo (State Government/2003))

Members Absent:

Sub-Group 1: Fred Ebel (Timber/2001); Harold Mathews (Rights-of-Way/2002)

Sub-Group 2: Donald Walter (Conservation/2001)

Sub-Group 3: Bill Graedel (Elected Official/2003)

Designated Federal Official:

Joseph K. Buesing

Federal Officials:

Scott Boyd, Fire Management Office, Spokane BLM
Kevin Devitt, Acting Field Manager, Border Resource Area, BLM
Jim Fisher, Field Manager, Wenatchee Resource Area, BLM
Kathy Helm, Planner & Environmental Coordinator, Spokane District, BLM

Guests:

- Doug Conner, Eastern Washington Dirt Riders Association
- Shelly Short, U.S. Congressman George Nethercutt's Office
- Ivan Urnovitz, Northwest Mining Association

Meeting Recorder: Theresa Alurac

The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m. by Joe Buesing, Designated Federal Official, who first introduced non-BLM guests. Mr. Buesing then gave an update on the selection status of the Field Manager position for the Spokane District's Border Resource Area.

Other announcements were as follows:

- The Colville Forest Service planner, George Buckingham, accepted a position in Oregon. Also, the Forest Service is involved in forming new RACs associated with the Secure Payments Act and assistance to rural schools. The deadline for submitting an interest application to serve on these newly formed RACs is soon. The new RACs, like the EWRAC, will have 15 members. The Colville and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forests will each have a new RAC.
- The terms of five positions on the EWRAC are expiring in September: Dave Billingsley, Fred Ebel, Richard Old, Laura Smith, and Don Walters. Fred Ebel will not be reapplying. The application deadline was April 23, and the preliminary review of the applications will likely take a month.
- The National Fire Plan is being implemented, providing funding to land managing agencies for fuels management and suppression and also grant monies to rural fire districts, communities, counties, and states. There are three types of grants. Joe distributed a handout explaining these three grants, including their scope and eligible grant recipients.
- No decision has been issued yet on the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Project, pending review of the 74 protests received.

Since Mr. Mathews, who was appointed Acting Chair at the November meeting, was absent, the RAC by consensus elected Dave Billingsley to serve as Acting Chair for today's meeting.

Review of RAC Charter

Mr. Buesing discussed review of the RAC charters. The EWRAC charter, a copy of which is in the RAC packets today, expires September 20. Any comments or suggestions the RAC has about modifying the charter when it is renewed may be submitted to the Secretary for consideration. Several RAC members expressed concern about the RAC boundary.

Action Taken: The RAC passed a resolution to form a subcommittee to review the charter and to report its findings to the full RAC at the next meeting. The subcommittee is composed of the following members: Doug Pineo, Mark Amara, and Andy Berg.

Public Input (10:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.)

Doug Conner, representing the Eastern Washington Dirt Riders Association, made a request to BLM to pursue legal access to the Juniper Dunes area being used for off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation. Mr. Conner suggested a new appraisal be done and that BLM check their eligibility for IAC funds to acquire lands for public access purposes. A letter from *Connie Coppersmith*, a private landowner in the Juniper Dunes subject area, was also presented to the RAC members. The Coppersmith letter expressed concern about trespass over their land by OHV users accessing BLM-administered public land.

Following Mr. Conner's presentation, there was an open discussion on this access issue, which involves acquiring legal access over private land, state land (Department of Natural Resources), and Peterson Road. Joe Buesing and Kevin Devitt discussed possible alternate routes into the subject OHV use area that have been reviewed, including the Smith Canyon which would involve the Bureau of Reclamation. A need was identified for an updated title report on Peterson Road due to some urban development in the general area. Another possible consideration is for Peterson Road to be in the county road system.

Harold was mentioned as a person to consult.

Ivan Urnowitz, representing the Northwest Mining Association, expressed the NWMA support for RACs.

BLM/FS Fire Presentations

Ron Fritsch, Spokane District BLM fuels specialist, gave a powerpoint presentation of the Spokane District's fire program and also read an overview of the Colville National Forest's fire program. Joe distributed grant information on the National Fire Plan, which explains the three categories, eligibility requirements, and application dates. Additional information is available on the website, given on the handout.

Lunch Recess (12:15 - 1:00 p.m.)

Review of November RAC Meeting Notes

The minutes were adopted following a slight correction to the draft as requested by Mark Amara.

Future Meeting Dates and Agendas

A May 24, 2001 RAC field trip meeting was tentatively set for Douglas County with a focus on grouse issues related to public lands.

Potential field trips include: Whitman County, Rock Lake, Tribal meeting, northern Ferry County.

Officer Nomination

Dave Billingsley was elected as Chairperson. A motion was made and passed to elect a vice-chair, and Harold Mathews was elected for the position.

Other Business

Andrew Berg distributed an article about "The Caribou Conundrum."

Mark Amara gave a report on the satellite broadcast he watched in late November where Bruce Babbitt, then Secretary of Interior, addressed Resource Advisory Councils.

Jim Fisher reported that the Central Washington Assembled Land Exchange is available for public comment until May 29.

Joanne Meninick requested information about the BLM's Wild Horse Adoption program and a schedule of adoptions. [Rick McComas provided a packet of information to Joanne after the meeting was adjourned.]

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.